

<p style="text-align: center;">STATE OF VERMONT AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Research and Agreements with Outside Entities</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Page 1 of 4</p>						
<p style="text-align: center;">CHAPTER: GENERAL</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">#08</p>	<p>Supersedes: 08, dated 6/30/2017; Instructions for Research Requests Guidance; Requests to do Research Guidance</p>							
<p>Local Procedure(s) Required: No Applicability: All staff (including contractors and volunteers) Security Level: “B” – Anyone may have access to this document.</p>									
<p>Approved:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; border: none;"><u>SIGNED</u></td> <td style="width: 33%; border: none;"><u>06/20/2023</u></td> <td style="width: 33%; border: none;"><u>07/05/2023</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Nicholas J. Deml, Commissioner</td> <td style="border: none;">Date Signed</td> <td style="border: none;">Date Effective</td> </tr> </table>				<u>SIGNED</u>	<u>06/20/2023</u>	<u>07/05/2023</u>	Nicholas J. Deml, Commissioner	Date Signed	Date Effective
<u>SIGNED</u>	<u>06/20/2023</u>	<u>07/05/2023</u>							
Nicholas J. Deml, Commissioner	Date Signed	Date Effective							

PURPOSE

This policy establishes guidelines for Vermont Department of Corrections’ (DOC’s) staff when working in collaboration with outside groups, agencies, departments, contractors, or individuals. This includes: providing direction for groups or individuals interested in researching the DOC or individuals under its custody or supervision; and establishing expectations for DOC staff when entering into agreements with outside entities.

AUTHORITY

28 V.S.A. § 101

POLICY

The DOC's policy is to work closely with other groups, agencies, departments, and individuals in an effort to best serve individuals under the custody or supervision of the DOC. These relationships include partnerships to: provide services; share information when appropriate and allowable; and respond to research requests around DOC practices and populations. These relationships must be clearly defined, in order to decrease ambiguity and clearly outline each party's duties.

GENERAL PROCEDURES

A. Instructions for Research Requests

1. DOC is receptive and supportive of outside groups or individuals interested in doing corrections research. The DOC requires researchers to apply for approval before conducting any research in connection with the DOC, to safeguard the rights of DOC staff and individuals under the custody or supervision of the DOC.
2. Individuals or groups wishing to inquire about a research project must submit a research request form, which is located in the Research & Data section of the DOC website. The request must include the following information:
 - a. Point of contact(s);
 - b. Overview of the research project;
 - c. Benefit of the research project;
 - d. Type of data collection involved;
 - e. Population(s) of interest;
 - f. Whether the results will be published publicly; and
 - g. Projected timetable for research.
3. Upon submission of a research request, researchers will receive an email requesting they submit all pertinent documents, including any protocols, surveys, interview documents, or Institutional Review Board (IRB) approvals to the DOC Research & Data Unit. The Research & Data Unit, and any applicable DOC subject matter experts, shall review these documents.
4. The Research & Data Unit shall review fully submitted research requests, and notify the researcher whether the project has been approved by the DOC.

5. If the proposal is approved by DOC, the Research & Data Unit shall:
 - a. Provide the researcher(s) with an IRB application form with instructions, if the research requires IRB review. If the researcher is unsure of whether the study requires IRB review, they should request guidance from the Research & Data Unit via the research request form; and
 - b. Coordinate the process of developing a data sharing agreement with the researcher(s), if the project requires one.
6. All proposed research must be done in accordance with DOC's policy on records and access to information.
7. Any DOC staff member who becomes aware of an inquiry for research shall notify the Research & Data Unit and forward all pertinent information.

B. Entering Into Agreements with Outside Entities

1. Prior to entering into an agreement with an outside entity, staff shall contact a Grants and Contracts Specialist or the Financial Director in the DOC Central Business Office to discuss the proposal and determine the appropriate agreement type and procurement activity for the specific service or relationship.
2. DOC staff shall comply with the following when entering into an agreement with an outside entity:
 - a. DOC staff shall fully comply with Vermont Agency of Administration Bulletin 3.5 (herein "Bulletin 3.5"), *Procurement and Contracting Procedures*, when procuring goods and services and entering into contracts and memorandums of understanding (MOUs).
 - b. DOC staff shall fully comply with Vermont Agency of Administration Bulletin 5.0, *Policy for Grant Issuance and Monitoring*, when issuing and monitoring grants.
 - c. DOC staff shall route all DOC agreements, including those entered into by local facility and field sites, through the DOC Central Business Office for review and approval.
 - d. DOC staff shall ensure all DOC agreements are executed by the designated appointing authority, as defined in Bulletin 3.5.

- e. The DOC Central Business Office houses a repository of all DOC agreements, including local agreements.
 - i. DOC staff shall forward all fully executed agreements to the Central Business Office for maintenance.
 - ii. Central Business Office staff shall conduct a review of this inventory at least once per year to ensure the list is comprehensive and accurate.
 - f. DOC staff shall work with the Agency of Digital Service (ADS) to determine if additional information is needed for the transmission of State data through an Interconnection Security Agreement (ISA). An ISA is a technical, legal document that outlines and supports the establishment, maintenance, and termination of a data exchange between the DOC and an outside entity.
 - i. When necessary, DOC staff shall ensure that a fully executed ISA is maintained with ADS to support the transmission of State data.
 - ii. DOC Central Business Office staff shall include ISAs in their inventory and annual review of agreements.
3. In addition to the above requirements, facility and field staff shall comply with the following when entering into a local agreement:
- a. Facility or field staff seeking to enter a local agreement shall reach out to the DOC Central Business Office for guidance.
 - b. Correctional facilities and probation and parole offices may only enter into the following agreement types:
 - i. Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs); and
 - ii. Letters of Understanding (LOUs).